



COMMITTEE INVISIBLE 2017-05-20

NOW: THE INVISIBLE COMMITTEE (1)

DOCUMENTATION CAPITALISM, INVISIBLE COMMITTEE RIOTS

taken from Autonomies

It's useless to wait-for a breakthrough, for the revolution, the nuclear apocalypse or a social movement. To go on waiting is madness. The catastrophe is not coming, it is here. We are already situated within the collapse of a civilization. It is within this reality that we must choose sides.

The Invisible Committee, *The Coming Insurrection*

With this post, we begin the translation into english of the Invisible Committee's most recent essay, Maintenant/Now (following on The Coming Insurrection and To Our Friends) . And we do so because of the importance that we attribute, and have attributed, to their ongoing reflections on/interventions in our world.

Each post will be a chapter of the work. What follows then is the first of seven.

Tomorrow is cancelled

All the reasons for carrying out a revolution are present. None is missing. The sinking of politics, the arrogance of the powerful, the reign of the false, the vulgarity of the wealthy, the cataclysms of industry, rampant poverty, naked exploitation, ecological apocalypse – we are spared nothing, not even that of being informed. "Climate: 2016 breaks the record of heat", tells us *Le Monde* on its first page, as almost every year nowadays. All the reasons are united, but it is not reasons that make revolutions, it is bodies. And the bodies are all in front of screens.

We can watch a presidential campaign sink to the depths. The transformation of the "most important moment of French political life" into a grand game of massacre doesn't render the soap opera anymore captivating. *Koh-Lanta* [French version of the U.S. "reality" show *Survivor*] could not be imagined with such characters, nor with such vertiginous twists, such cruel trials, such general humiliation. *The spectacle of politics survives as the spectacle of its decomposition.* The incredulity reaches to the very landscapes of filth. The National Front, this political negation of politics, this negation of politics *on the terrain of the political*,

logically occupies the "centre" of the smoking ruins of this political game. Humanity witnesses, bewitched, at its own sinking, like at a first class spectacle. It is so much *taken* that it does not feel the water lapping at its legs. In the end, it will transform everything into a buoy. It is the destiny of the shipwrecked to transform everything that they touch into a buoy.

This world is no longer to be commented on, criticised, denounced. We live surrounded by a fog of commentaries and of commentaries on commentaries, of criticisms and of criticisms of criticisms, of revelations that trigger nothing, except revelations about revelations. And this fog takes away from us any hold on the world. There is nothing to criticise in Donald Trump. The worst that one can say about him, he has already absorbed, incorporated. He embodies it. He wears as a necklace all of the grievances that one could ever imagine holding against him. He is his own caricature, and he is proud. Even the creators of *South Park* throw in the towel: "It is very complicated now that satire has become reality. We really did try to laugh at what was happening but we couldn't keep up. What was happening was much funnier than anything that we could imagine. We therefore decided to give up, to let them play their comedy, and we would play our own." We live in a world that has established itself *beyond all justification*. Here, criticism can do nothing, no more than satire. They remain without effect. To stick to the denunciation of discrimination, injustice, and wait to harvest the fruits, is to be mistaken about our epoch. The leftists who believe that we can still raise something by working the lever of guilty conscience are very much mistaken. They may very well go into public to scratch at their wounds and make audible their complaints believing that this will excite sympathy, they will arouse nothing more than disdain and the desire to destroy them. "Victim" has become an insult in all quarters of the world.

There is a social use of language. No one believes it any longer. Its price has fallen to zero. From which comes the inflationary bubble in global jabber. Everything that is social is deceitful; everyone knows it from now on. It is not only those who govern, the advertisers and the public personalities who "engage in communication". It is every entrepreneur of the self that this society aims to make of each of us, persistent practitioners of the art of "public relations". Having become an instrument of communication, language is no longer its own reality, but an instrument in the service of operating on the real, to obtain *effects* according to different conscious strategies. Words are no longer put into circulation except to travesty things. Everything sails under false flags. Usurpation has become universal. One does not retreat before any paradox. The state of emergency is the state of law. War is made in the name of peace. Bosses "offer jobs". Security cameras are "apparatuses of video protection". The executioners/torturers complain that they are persecuted. Traitors protest their sincerity and their fidelity. Mediocrities are cited everywhere as examples. There is the real practice on the one hand, and on the other, the discourse, which is an implacable counterpoint, with the perversion of all concepts, the universal deceit of oneself and of others. Everywhere, it is exclusively a question of preserving or extending interests. In return, the world is peopled by the silent. Certain among them explode in acts of madness closer and closer to each other by date. Who can be surprised? Don't say anymore, "The young no longer believe in anything." Say: "Shit! They no longer swallow our lies." Don't say anymore, "The young are nihilists." Say: "Fuck! If this continues, they're going to survive the collapse of our world."

The value of language has fallen to zero, and yet we write. It's because there is another use of language. One can speak of life, and one can speak *from* life. It's not the same language, nor the same style. It's also not the same idea of truth. There is a "courage of truth" that consists in hiding behind the objective neutrality of the "facts". There is another that considers that a word which leads to nothing, that is worth nothing in itself, that doesn't risk its position, that costs nothing, isn't worth much. All the criticism of financial capitalism is a pale when compared to the smashed window of a bank, tagged "Here are your updates!" ["Tiens, tes aggios!"] It's not because of ignorance that the "youths" appropriate the *punchline* of rappers in their political slogans rather than the maxims of philosophers. And it is from decency that they don't take up the "We renounce nothing!" ["On lâche rien!"], that militants cry out at the moment when they renounce everything. It is that some speak of the world, while others speak *from* the world.

The true deceit is not that which one does to others, but that which one does *to oneself*. The first is, in comparison to the other, relatively exceptional. Deceit is refusing to see certain things *that one sees*, and refusing to see them *as one sees them*. True deceit, are all of the screens, all of the images, all of the explanations, which one lets between oneself and the world. It's the way that we daily trample upon our own perceptions. So much so, that as long as it will not be a question of truth, it will not be a question of anything. There will be nothing. Nothing except this planetary asylum of fools. The truth is not something towards which we would tend, but a non-evasive relation to what there is. It is not a "problem" except for those who already see life as a problem. It is not something that one professes, but a way of being in the world. It is therefore not something that is possessed, or accumulated. It is given in a situation, from moment to moment. Whoever senses the duplicity of someone, the harmful character of a representation or of the forces that move beneath the play of images, will strip away whatever hold they have on them. Truth is the full presence to oneself and to the world, the vital contact with the real, the acute perception of the givens of existence. In a world where everyone plays, where everyone is on stage, where one communicates all the more so when nothing is really said, the single word "truth" chills, irritates or arouses sneers. Everything that this epoch contains of sociability has assumed the habit of supporting itself on the crutches of deceit to the point of not being able to let go of them. There is no need to "proclaim the truth". To preach the truth to those who cannot even tolerate slight doses of it is only to expose oneself to their vengeance. In what follows, we in no way pretend to speak of "the truth", but of the perception that we have of the world, of what we hold to, of what keeps us standing and alive. Common sense's neck must be twisted: truths are multiple, but deceit is one, because it is universally leagued against the least little truth that may surface.

We are kept up to date on the thousands of threats that surround us – terrorists, endocrine disruptors, migrants, fascism, unemployment. And thus the imperturbable routine of capitalist normality is perpetuated: against the background of thousands of unsuccessful plots, hundreds of postponed catastrophes. It has to be recognised that the riot has the paradoxical virtue of liberating us from the livid anxiety that one tries to inoculate us with, day after day, with armed military patrols, *breaking news* and government announcements. It is what the amateurs of those funeral processions called “demonstrations” cannot understand, those who around a glass of red wine taste the pleasure of their defeat, those who let go of a flatulent “Or else this is going to blow!” before wisely returning to their bus. In the street confrontation, the enemy has a clear face, whether in civilian clothes or in armour. S/he has largely known methods. S/he has a name and a function. S/he is additionally called a “functionary”, as s/he declares soberly. The friend also has gestures, movements and a recognisable appearance. There is in the riot an incandescence of the presence to self and to others, a lucid fraternity that the Republic is very well incapable of arousing. The organised riot is equally able to produce what this society is incapable of engendering: living and irreversible ties. Those who stop before the images of violence always miss what is at play in the fact of together taking the risk to smash, tag, confront the police. One never leaves one’s first riot untouched. It is this positivity of the riot that the spectator prefers not to see, and which in the end frightens her/him far more than the damage, the charges and counter-charges. In the riot, there is the production and affirmation of *friendships*, direct configurations of the world, clear possibilities of action, ready to hand means. The situation has a form and one can move within it. The risks are clear, in contrast to all of the nebulous “risks” that governments take pleasure in making hang over our existences. The riot is desirable as a moment of truth. It is a momentary suspension of the confusion: in the gas, things are curiously clear and the real is finally readable. It is difficult then not to see who is who. Speaking of the day of insurrection on the 15th of July 1927 in Vienna in the course of which proletarians burned the palace of justice, Elias Canetti said: “It is what I lived closest to a revolution. Hundreds of pages would not suffice to describe everything that I saw.” It would serve as the inspiration for his chef-d’oeuvre *Crowds and Power*. The riot is formative through what it makes us see.

There was in the English navy this old toast, “Confusion to our enemies!” Confusion has a strategic value. It is not by chance. It scatters wills and prohibits their renewed reassembly. It has the taste of the ashes of defeat, whereas the battle hasn’t yet taken place, and probably never will. Each of the recent attacks in France is thus followed by a train of confusion, which comes opportunely to increase the government discourse on the matter. Those who claim responsibility for the attacks, those who call for war on those who claim responsibility for them; they all have an interest in our confusion. As for those who execute the attacks, they are often the children – the children of the confusion.

This world that babbles so much has nothing to say: it is devoid of affirmation. Perhaps it believed that it thereby rendered itself unassailable. But it above all placed itself at the mercy of any consequent affirmation. A world whose positivity arises from so many ravages well deserves that what is affirmed with life first takes on the form of pillaging, smashing, rioting. We will not fail to be taken as desperate, on the grounds that we act, we build, we attack *without hope*. Hope, here is at least a sickness with which this civilisation has not infected us. We are not nevertheless desperate. No one ever acted through hope. Hope is related to waiting, to refusing to see what there is, to the fear of breaking in on the present, in short: to the fear *of living*. To hope is to declare oneself in advance without a hold on what one nevertheless expects. It is to hold back from the process so as not to be held to the results. It is to want things to be otherwise without wanting the means to make them so. It is cowardliness. One has to know to what one holds, and then hold to it. Even if to make enemies. Even if to make friends. As soon as we know what we want, we are no longer alone, the world peoples itself. Everywhere allies, those close by and an infinite gradation of possible friendships. Nothing is close by for one who floats. Hope, this very light but constant *impulse towards tomorrow* that is communicated to us day by day is the best agent for the maintenance of order. We are daily informed of problems about which we can do nothing, but for which there will surely be solutions *tomorrow*. The whole crushing sentiment of powerless that this social organisation cultivates endlessly in each of us is nothing but an enormous lesson in waiting. It is a flight from the now.

There never was, there is not and there never will be anything but the now. And even if what was formerly exercises some effect on the now, it is because what was formerly was never anything itself except a now. As tomorrow will be. The only way to understand something in the past is to understand that it was also a now. It is to feel the weak breath of air in which the women and men of yesterday lived. If we are so inclined to flee the now, it is because it is the place of the decision. It is the place of the “I accept” or of the “I refuse”. It is the place of the logical gesture that immediately follows perception. It is the present, and thus the place of presence. It is the instant, ceaselessly repeated, of taking a position. To think in distant terms is always more comfortable. “In the end”, things will change; “in the end”, beings will be transfigured. Meanwhile, let us continue as we are, let us remain what we are. A spirit that thinks in terms of the future is incapable of acting in the present. S/he does not seek change: s/he avoids it. The current disaster is like the monstrous accumulation of all the deferred moments in the past, to which is added in a permanent landslide that of each day and of each instant. But life is always played out now, and now, and now.

Each one sees that this civilisation is like a train heading towards the abyss, and that accelerates. The more it accelerates, the more are heard the drunken hysterical hoorays from the discotheque car. You would have to lend an ear to detect the petrified silence of rational spirits who no longer understand anything, of those anguished who bite their nails and the false accent of serenity in the intermittent exclamations of those who play cards, waiting. Internally, many people have chosen to jump from the train, but they remain on the footboard. They are still beset by so many things. And they feel so held because they have made the choice, but the decision is lacking. For it is the decision that traces in the present the manner and the possibility of acting, of taking a jump that is not into the void. This decision, it is that of the deserter, that of stepping out of the rank, that of organising

oneself, that of secession, be it imperceptibly, but in all cases, *now*.

The epoch belongs to the resolute.

[← PREVIOUS](#) [NEXT →](#)

META

[CONTACT](#)

[FORCE-INC/MILLE PLATEAUX](#)

[IMPRESSUM](#)

[DATENSCHUTZERKLÄRUNG](#)

TAXONOMY

[CATEGORIES](#)

[TAGS](#)

[AUTHORS](#)

[ALL INPUT](#)

SOCIAL

[FACEBOOK](#)

[INSTAGRAM](#)

[TWITTER](#)